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The Ancient Estate of
Governor William
Bradford

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THE ANCIENT ESTATE OF
GOVERNOR WILLIAM
BRADFORD

BY THOMAS BRADFORD DREW

1897

Thos. P. Smith Printing Co.,
Boston.

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THE ANCIENT ESTATE OF
GOVERNOR WILLIAM BRADFORD AT
JONES RIVER IN THE NORTH PART
OF PLYMOUTH, NOW THE TOWN OF
KINGSTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

ON the eleventh day of December (old style), 1620, the exploring party of pilgrims who had left their ship, the "Mayflower," in Cape Cod harbor, landed at Plymouth, where they found "a place (as they supposed) fitt for situation; at least it was y^e best they could find and y^e season & their presente necessitie, made them glad to accepte of it. So they returned to their shippe again with this news to y^e rest of their people, which did much comforte their harts."*

Five days after, Dec. 16, the "Mayflower" left her mooring at Cape Cod and reached Plymouth Harbor in safety. An attempt the day previous had proved unsuccessful.

On Monday, the 18th, a party, probably the same explorers of whom we have spoken, with the addition of Capt. Jones of the ship and three or four sailors, went on land and marched along the shore in a northwesterly direction for several miles, viewing the country; but it was not until the next day that the river since known as Jones River was discovered. The account of that discovery was published

* Bradford's Manuscript, page 53.

published in "A Relation or Journal of the beginnings and proceedings of the English Plantation settled at Plymouth, New England" which was written by "the actors themselves," and is as follows:

"The next morning being Tuesday, the 19. of December, wee went again to discover further; some went on Land and some in the Shallop, the Land we found as the former day we did, and we found a Creeke, and went vp three English myles, a very pleasant river, at full Sea a Barke of thirty tunne may goe up, but at low water scarce our Shallop could passe; this place we had a great liking to plant in, but that it was so farre from our fishing, our principall profit, and so incompassed with woods, that we should bee in much danger of the Salvages, and our number being so little and so much ground to cleare, so as we thought good to quit and cleare that place, till we were of more strength; some of vs hauing a good mind for safety to plant in the greater Ile,"* etc.

As stated by themselves, the locality by the river just described had its attractions for them, and for a short time their minds seemed rather unsettled in regard to the best place for planting their colony, notwithstanding the selection previously made, for the record goes on to state that as they returned again for the night to their ship, they resolved to settle
"on

*Clark's Island in the bay.

“on some of those places” the next morning, which they did, and they came to a conclusion by most voices to set on the main land on the first place, on a high ground, etc. Thus their final decision was not made until Wednesday, Dec. 20, or Dec. 30 according to the new style of reckoning dates.

As William Bradford was one of the exploring party when Jones River was discovered, it is very reasonable to suppose that he was of the number who had a great liking for that locality, for within a few years after the settlement, we find him the possessor of quite a large estate there, portions of which remained in the family name for more than two centuries, and within the memory of persons still living. It does not appear upon the colonial records just when the Governor had the grant of those lands, but we may suppose it was as early as 1627-8, when the second division of land was agreed upon.* We know he possessed lands there before 1636, for it was recorded that year, “whereas there is reported to be certaine wast land between the lott of Stephen Tracy† & that of Liuetent Will Holmes at the request of M^r Will Bradford, such land was granted to him and his heirs forever, having other lands very neere & necessary

* See Plymouth Colony Records, Vol. XI., p. 77, Vol. XII., p. 13, and Bradford's Manuscript Hist., pp. 145-146.

† Stephen Tracy's estate was near that of the late Samuel Loring, just at the boundary line of Duxbury.

necessary thereunto.”* Then in 1637, “an enlargement of lands at Stony Brook† is graunted to M^r William Bradford, to be viewed and layd forth in convenyent place for him, by two of the assistants, and to adjoyne to the lands he hath there already” ‡

The Governor's house is mentioned this same year, as will be seen by the following Court Order, May 10, 1637: “It is agreed that the heighwayes, both for horse, cart, and foote, shalbe as followeth: From the towne of Plymouth to Joanes River, as it was cleared, pvided it be holpen at M^r Allertons§ by going through the old cowe-yard at the river, the place being comonly called the Old Wading Place, and so through a valley vp the hill, and then to turne straight to Abraham Pierces ground||, and through his ground as it is marked, and so the old path to Massechuset, leaueing M^r Bradfords house vpon the west, & from M^r Bradfords house to Steeppen Tracys ground, as the way now lyeth ¶” etc. As we do not know how early the Governor built his house there, we cannot now determine how long he resided on this estate, but it is our belief that he was living there several years before 1637, and until about

* Colony Rec., Vol. 1., p. 46.

† A brook which flows from Blackwater Pond to Jones River.

‡ Plymouth Col. Rec., Vol. I., p. 70.

§ The estate of Joseph A. Holmes was a portion of Mr. Allerton's.

|| South Side of Stony Brook.

¶ Colony Rec., Vol. I., p. 58.

about the year 1647. Something may yet be discovered which will throw additional light upon this question, but for the present we will only state as facts what we find upon our public records. The opinion has been expressed that perhaps the Governor lived there during those five years only, when he declined the cares of office,* but it is recorded that during one of his official years he was there:

“At a Townes meeting holden the Xth february 1643, It is agreed That wolfe traps be made according to the order of the Court in manner following

1 That one trap be made at Joanes River by the Governors famyly Mr Prences and Mr Hanburies and Mathew fuller and Abraham Pearce” † etc.

The next year, when Edward Winslow was governor, we find the following record: “At a Townes meeting the XXII June 1644—In case of alarume in tyme of warr or danger these divisions of the Towneship are to be observed and these companys to repaire together

At Joanes River	Mr. Bradfords famyly one
	Mr. Prences one
	Mr. Hanbury one
	Mr. Howland one
	francis Cooke one
	Phineas Pratt
	Gregory Armestrong
	John Winslow
	Mr. Lee

* 1633-34-36-38-1644.

Plymouth Town Records, Vol. I., p. 16.

We have stated on a previous page that it is our belief that the Governor did not live on his farm after the year 1647, and that is based upon this record—1647, Oct. 26. “The Court ordereth, and giues full power vnto M^r Bradford, Gou, to stay and seyze vpon all y^e goods, corne, and graine y^t are in and vpon his farme by Jones River, vntill his tennants haue fully satisfied and payde vnto him or his ass^s, all such rents & oth^r dues as are due and payable vnto him fro his now tennants there.”*

Notwithstanding this record just given, there are some of the descendants of Bradford who think he continued to live at Jones River, even if he did have tenants upon his farm there at the date last mentioned.

Had the places where the town meetings were held previous to the time of which we are speaking been designated upon the records, we could, perhaps, better judge where the Governor might have been living at the different times. On the records of the *Town* of Plymouth, we find that after 1647, those meetings were held occasionally “at the house of M^r William Bradford, Gouv.,”—and as we had supposed no such meetings were recorded before, that fact strengthened our belief for a while that the Governor had by that year removed from his estate at the
river

*Plymouth Colony Rec., Vol. II., p. 119.

river, to a place where it would be more convenient for such meetings to be held at his house, but it was soon discovered on the Colony records that a "townmeeting" was held at the Governor's house Jan. 24, 1641-2*. The reports of a few of those town meetings which happened to be recorded on the *Colony* records, merely mention that they were held "before the Governor" or his assistants, but far the greater number of reports in both Colony and Town records fail to specify the places of those meetings. As many of the inhabitants of Plymouth were living in the vicinity of Jones River at an early date, the town meetings may have been held occasionally at the Governor's house there for aught we know. One thing more we will notice before dismissing the question we have been considering: Any one familiar with Gov. Bradford's famous history of Plymouth Plantation, the original manuscript of which has lately been returned to Massachusetts, will remember that his annals close with the year 1646, but there is added thereunto the following:—

"Anno 1647 and Anno 1648." Does not the addition of those two dates imply that the Governor had notes or material to add to his annals for those years at least, but for some reason neglected to continue his history

*Colony Rec., Vol. II., p. 31.

history, although he lived more than ten years afterward. He states that he commenced his writings about the year 1630, and pieced them up at times of leisure afterward.* If he removed to the town proper about 1647, as we have thought, would not those hours of leisure have been more likely to come to him while living on his estate at Jones River than when in the town, where according to the nature of things, he could not have been so secluded, and must not the duties of his office have increased as the colony grew older? The reader will bear in mind that we are only stating our opinions now, but we cannot help feeling that there is some significance in the fact of the first date at the abrupt close of the famous history being the same year (1647) as the time of the Governor's supposed removal from his farm, the reasons for which supposition we have endeavored to give here. We have thus laid before the reader, after an examination of the records, what has come to our notice which in anyway bears upon the question we have been considering, and it may be the means of interesting someone to make a more careful search, as in some unexpected way a record may yet be discovered which will throw more light on the dwelling-places of Gov. Bradford, two centuries and a half ago. The Governor
died

* Manuscript Hist., Reverse of p. 3.

died May 9, 1657, leaving three sons, viz.: John, William and Joseph. John had previously removed to Norwich, Conn., while the others remained in Plymouth. Joseph, the youngest, living about half a mile from the mouth of Jones River, near the ledge of rocks through which the railroad now passes, at a place which was called "Flat House Dock." Major William Bradford, who became one of the most important men of the colony, occupied that portion of the estate of his father which has been more particularly described in this article. There he reared his large family of fifteen children, from whom thousands, bearing countless family names, have descended during the two centuries that have elapsed since the younger sons were born. During the lifetime of Major William, we occasionally find upon the public records items which relate to the lands that he occupied in the vicinity of Jones River or Stony Brook, one of which, for its historical interest, is given here. "1663, 1. June. Whereas there was a graunt by the Court of an addition of land vnto M^r Willam Bradford Seni^r, as appeers vpon record, which was not layed out nor bounded in his lifetime; and whereas Captaine Willam Bradford, the son of the said M^r Willam Bradford Seni^r, did make request vnto the Court that the same might bee pformed; the Court held att Plymouth

on

on the third of October 1662 did appoint M^r Willam Collyare and M^r John Alden, Assistants, to view and bound an addition adjoyning vnto the lands which the said Willam Bradford posseseth. Now, wee, the aboue named Assistants, haue, this twentyeth of May, 1663 viewed and bounded as followeth: on the north east from a small rundelett that runeth downe to a place commonly called the Tussukes*, and soe to range alonge northerly by Plymouth bounds next to the bounds of Duxburrow, and soe to the brooke that runes into black waters, to the place where the old path went to the bay, so rainging downe the brook a mile in length.

WILLAM COLLYARE,
JOHN ALDIN.

A portion of the land above described has never been sold to this day (unless some division between the heirs might be called a sale), but has descended by inheritance or bequest from the Pilgrim Governor to the present owners. The last of the family to own it was David Bradford, who bequeathed it to Francis Drew in 1840. The names of the last two persons will appear on the following pages.

In the year 1662, when Alexander (Wam-sutta) the successor of Massasoit was suspected
of

*Now called Tussock Brook.

of designs against the English, Major Bradford was with Major Winslow when the chieftain was surprised and taken prisoner. As the account of Alexander's arrest and death has been given to the public in different forms, it will not be out of place to give Bradford's version of the affair, and it is related here to show that "*Wamsutta*" tarried at the house of Bradford just previous to his death. It is contained in a letter written by Rev. John Cotton to Dr. Mather, which was published by Judge Davis in his edition of Morton's "Memorial," and is as follows:—

"Major Bradford confidently assures me that in the narrative '*de Alexandro*' there are many mistakes, and fearing lest you should, through misinformation, print some mistakes on that subject from his mouth, I thus write: Reports being here that Alexander was plotting or privy to plots against the English, authority sent for him to come down. He came not. Whereupon Major Winslow was sent to fetch him. Major Bradford with others went with him. At Munponset river, a place not many miles hence, they found Alexander, with about eight men and sundry squaws. He was there about getting canoes. He and his men were at their breakfast under their shelter, their guns being without. They saw the English coming, but continued eating and Winslow telling

telling their business, Alexander freely and readily, without the least hesitancy, consented to go, giving his reason why he came not to the Court before, viz.: because he waited for Capt. Willett's return from the Dutch, being desirous to speak with him first. They brought him to Mr. Collier's that day, and Gov. Prince living remote at Eastham, those few magistrates who were at hand issued the matter peaceably and immediately dismissed Alexander, to return home, which he did part of the way; but in two or three days after, he returned and went to Major Winslow's house, intending thence to travel into the Bay,* and so home; but at the Major's house he was taken very sick, and was by water conveyed to Major Bradford's and thence carried upon the shoulders of his men to Tetequit river, and thence in canoes home, and in about two or three days after died." The account of this affair which had been previously published, made it appear that force or threats were used before Alexander would accompany the officers, and that the vexation and excitement produced the fever which caused his death. As this sketch is simply to give a history of the ancient estate, nothing more will be told here of Major Bradford's military career, the most important part of which transpired a few years after

* Colony of Massachusetts Bay.

after the event we have just related took place, for Philip's War was during the years 1675-76. Neither will much be said relating to the genealogy of his family other than what is revealed in his will, which was written about eight months before his death, which occurred February 20, 1704. That document is given here, in full, as it appears on the Plymouth Probate Records, Vol. 2, p. 40.

"The last Testament of William Bradford living in the township of Plymouth in the Province of the Massachusetts Bay in New England:

I, the said William Bradford, being exercised with many bodily infirmities which give me cause to think the time of my dissolution to be near, being of a disposing mind and memory, do make, ordain and constitute this my last will and testament as followeth:

1. Item. I commit my soul to God my Creator and my body to the dust of the earth to be decently buried in hopes of a glorious resurrection through the merits of my dear Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ. As to what outward estate it has pleased God to bless me with, I dispose of the same as followeth: My debts being first faithfully, fully and truly satisfied and paid, my will is that my loving wife Mary Bradford have her thirds in my lands and meadows where I now dwell in
the

the township of Plymouth as also in all my lands and meadows which I have elsewhere not by me heretofore disposed of during her natural life and that she have with David Bradford, my son, the house in which I live, with the barn and orchard by it during her life and after her decease that my said son, David Bradford shall have my said house barn and orchard to him and his heirs forever saving that my will is that my sons Ephraim and Hezekiah Bradford shall have so much interest in my said house as to have liberty to dwell therein till they can provide for themselves otherwise.

2. Item: To my eldest son, John Bradford, I have made over tracts of land and meadow as by deed under my hand and seal appeareth whereon he now dwelleth, further, I give and bequeath to him my father's manuscript viz: A Narrative of the beginning of New Plimouth, Pareus upon the Revelation and Bariff's Military discipline.

3. Item: To my grandson William Bradford, son of my son William Bradford, deceased, I have given tracts of land and meadow as appear under my hand and seal, further I give him when he shall come of age, one of Mr. Perkins his works.

4. Item: To my son Thomas Bradford I have given a portion in lands in Norwich, (which were the lands of my brother John
Bradford

Bradford) as per deed under my hand and seal as may appear.

5. Item: To my son Samuel Bradford I have given tracts of land under my hand and seal as may appear.

6. Item: To my son Joseph Bradford a portion of lands near Norwich aforesaid (which was his mother's and part I purchased) as may appear under my hand and seal, also I give to him the history of the Netherlands and a Rapier.

7. Item: I give and bequeath unto my four sons John Bradford, Thomas Bradford, Samuel Bradford and Joseph Bradford all that my part and right which I have to the head of Cape Cod.

8. Item: I give and bequeath to my son Samuel Bradford my right of commonage or common right which I have in the Township of Duxbury

9. Item: It is my will that my sons Israel Bradford, Ephraim Bradford, David Bradford and Hezekiah Bradford shall have all that my farm or tenement whereon I now dwell, together with all the fences orchards, trees and fruit trees (except what is above excepted) standing or growing thereon, with all the other lands meadows swamps or right of lands that I now have within the township of Plymouth lying on the northerly side of the brook commonly called Stony Brook
with

with all and singular the privileges thereof, which said land, meadows farm or tenement above said I do by these presents give bequeath and devise to my said four sons (that is to say each of them an equal part or proportion) to whom and their heirs forever not to be sold, given or made away either the whole or in part thereof except to each other or some bearing the name of the Bradfords descended from me. This I give and bequeath to them hoping they will show themselves very careful of, dutiful and respectful to my loving wife their mother during her life.

10. Item: It is my will that whereas my son Israel Bradford has been at charge in building an house upon part of the farm or tenement above—said that he, the said Israel shall have and enjoy the said house for his own, together with an acre of land thereunto adjoining, to him and his heirs forever.

11. Item: I will and bequeath to my said son Israel, my belt and Rapier.

12. Item: I give to my son Ephraim Bradford one of my musquetts and a table with drawers:

13. Item: I give to my son David Bradford my silver bowl* after his mother's decease not to be alienated from the family of the Bradfords.

14. Item:

* See Appendix A.

14. Item: I give to my son Hezekiah Bradford my gold ring and a silver spoon.

15. Item: I give to my grandson William Bradford the son of John Bradford my silver wine cup when he comes of age.

16. Item: I give to my daughters, Mercy Steel Hannah Ripley, Miletiah Steel, Mary Hunt to each of them besides what portion I have already given 10 shillings apiece to be paid within a year next after my decease.

17. Item: I give and bequeath to my daughter Alice Fitch a wrought cushion that was her mother's.

18. Item: I give unto my daughter Sarah Baker two of my biggest pewter platters and also a china bason; also a cow to be delivered to her within a year after my decease.

19. Item: I give unto my son Samuel Bradford all my Latin books to encourage him in bringing up one of his sons to learning which said books it is my will that they shall by him be given to his said son whom he shall so bring up.

20. Item: I give to every one of my daughters a good book which they may choose out of my library.

21. Item: I give to Hannah the wife of my son Samuel Bradford Mr. Borroughs on the 11th of Matthew.

22. Item: It is my will that the rest of my books be safely kept by my executors and
in

in case my son Samuel shall bring up one of his sons to learning to be by said executors delivered to him when he comes of age.

I do constitute and appoint my loving sons John Bradford, Samuel Bradford and Israel Bradford as executors of this my last will and testament to pay such debts as I owe, to receive my dues and to see my body decently buried, to defray the charge thereof and to see my will (as near as they can) in all the particulars of it performed, thus hoping that they will faithfully perform such a trust committed unto them. I do revoke and make void any former will by me at anytime heretofore made.

I, the said William Bradford have hereunto set my hand and seal this twenty-ninth day of June, 1703.

Signed sealed and declared to be his last will and testament

William Bradford

In presence of us

John Rogers

Thomas Loring

Ephraim Little Jr.

Major John Bradford, the eldest son of Major William, had (as is seen in the foregoing will) his portion of lands given him during

during his father's lifetime. He lived a few rods from Jones River, south of Stony Brook, and his house is still standing very near the railroad, so that anyone riding in the cars from Plymouth to Boston can have a good view of it while passing over the river. It was built about 1674, and according to tradition, an attempt was made to burn it, by the Indians, during Philip's War. In proof of this, it is stated that while repairs were being made on the house, the first part of the present century, charred timbers were discovered. This is the same house to which reference is made by Rev. Thomas Prince, the chronologist, in the note written by him on the fly-leaf of Gov. Bradford's manuscript history, where he describes his call on Major John Bradford in 1728. Kingston was set off from Plymouth in 1726, and previous to that time, when its territory was known as Jones River Parish, Major John Bradford had given lands for public purposes, viz.: the schoolhouse and meeting-house lots, and also for a burial ground. How much of those lands was previously in the possession of his father or grandfather we are not now able to state, not having investigated the records sufficiently, but we have a clearer knowledge of that part of the original Bradford estate on the north side of Stony Brook which Major William Bradford expressly requested, in the ninth item of his will,

will, should remain in the family name; and it is that portion which we shall more particularly describe in this paper. The four younger sons, referred to in the same item of the will, lived on various portions of the estate between Stony Brook and the bounds of Duxbury. Israel's house, referred to in the tenth item of his father's will, being about one-quarter of a mile in a northwesterly direction from the old homestead on the easterly side of the present Boston road, a short distance from the Stony Brook schoolhouse on the hill. Major William's widow died in 1715, and about that time the son David, to whom the ancient house was bequeathed, built a new one very nearly opposite the schoolhouse. He was the ancestor of one branch of the Le Baron family of Plymouth, as his daughter, Lydia Bradford, who first married Elkanah Cushman, became the wife of Dr. Lazarus Le Baron. Hezekiah Bradford lived a mile farther on the Boston road nearly to the bounds of Duxbury. The cellar of his house was visible a few years ago, just opposite the residence of the late Ira Chandler. The home of Ephraim is the only one we cannot positively locate. His son, Ezekiel, who removed to Maine about the time of the Revolution, lived at "Blackwater," a short distance south of his uncle Hezekiah, on the same place occupied by the late

late Nathaniel Faunce; and another son, Wait, had his house just northerly from "Brewster's Lane," near the locality known as the "Punch Bowls." Deacon James Foster, an aged citizen of Kingston, who was living in 1873, and who gave much valuable information in regard to the ancient families of the old colony, stated to the writer that he had been told that the house built by Deacon Wrestling Brewster about 1720, and which is still standing, "was not wholly built by Brewster, but that a portion of it was built by a Bradford." As there had never been any doubt where the other three brothers of whom we have been speaking had their homes, he felt that if a Bradford did build a part of the house it must have been Ephraim, and he could easily believe it, he said, "for the reason that Brewster was his brother-in-law, Bradford having married the latter's sister, Elizabeth." This last statement will probably raise a genealogical question which will be explained in the appendix B. We will now speak of that portion of the ancient estate that was destined to remain in the family name for a long term of years. After the house of David Bradford (which he built about 1715) had stood for fifty years, his son Nathan, in 1766, erected the dwelling-house which was owned by the late Thomas Bailey, and which is now in a well-preserved condition.

It

It is situated on the lot adjoining that whereon stood the old house of his grandfather, Major William. Nathan Bradford died in 1787, and but little of the original estate which he inherited had been disposed of during his lifetime.* His son David soon came in possession of his father's lands, and until after the year 1800 was the owner of nearly all the lands on both sides of the road north of Stony Brook to where the schoolhouse now stands. In 1804 he sold the lot on the easterly side of the road, which was bounded by the brook, to Thomas Cushman. (Plymouth Reg. of Deeds, Vol. 99, p. 226.) This is the same lot now owned by Mrs. Lydia T. Adams and her son, Horatio Adams. In 1806, a lot nearly opposite to the latter on the westerly side of the road was sold to Seth Drew, Jr., but not until 1822 was any more of the estate in that locality disposed of. In that year he sold to Francis Drew (who had married his niece, Joanna Bradford,) his house, built as before stated in 1766, and a tract of land which embraced the homestead lot of Major William Bradford. Then, in 1827, the remaining land on the easterly side of the road to the Adams lot was sold to the same person. Soon after he sold his house he

* The first lot north of Stony Brook on the westerly side of the highway was sold by him to Benj. Chipman in 1753, who built the house now standing there which was the home of Major Seth Drew for more than fifty years until his death in 1824.

he dwelt in another directly across the road, and in 1827 all the land between the latter house lot and that which he sold to Seth Drew in 1806, was conveyed to Eli Cook, Esq. David Bradford died Feb. 29, 1840, aged 83 years, and by a provision in his will the writer of this article came in possession of his homestead in 1858; thus being the last person having Bradford connected with his name to possess by inheritance or bequest in direct descent, any of that portion of the ancient estate mentioned in the ninth item of the will of Major William Bradford, which was written one hundred and fifty-five years before. The land conveyed to Francis Drew and Eli Cook was divided into lots, and during the succeeding thirty years they were all taken up for building purposes. In 1832, Mr. Drew sold the house, which was built by Nathan Bradford, to Thomas Bailey, whose family still owns it. In 1846, Mr. Drew erected a house on the vacant land directly in the rear of the lots that he had sold on the street, and very near the site of the ancient Bradford house. There he lived the remainder of his days, and at his death, in 1862, the property passed to his only living child, Elizabeth F., wife of Cornelius A. Faunce, who kept it in her possession for more than thirty years. She died in 1894, and her two sons retained the property for two years; when in the summer

summer of 1896 it was offered for sale, and for its family and historical associations the writer bought it, and soon made a plan to continue the road which led to the house on the place, through a vacant field to an ancient lane,* which was in the early days the way to different portions of the old estate, and then to lay out lots for building purposes.

This way was soon named "Bradford Road" and it passes the site of the ancient house now plainly seen by the depression in the surface of the ground. Alden Bradford, who was the Secretary of Massachusetts from 1812 to 1824 and President of the Pilgrim Society at Plymouth 1826 to 1841, went to Kingston while on one of his visits to Plymouth and requested the venerable David Bradford to point out to him the spot where the house of his ancestor stood, which he did and Deacon James Foster who gave this testimony, was present on that occasion. About 1855, Francis Drew made excavations in the old cellar and found numerous bricks (one of which is now in Pilgrim Hall at Plymouth) and a few household articles.

People of middle age well remember several trees of the old orchard which stood in a decaying condition after 1840; and one was left standing and bearing fruit until about twenty years ago. For proof of this statement
we

* See Appendix C.

we will quote from the proceedings of the Celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the Incorporation of Kingston, Mass., June 27, 1876. "The procession moved first to the estate formerly owned by Gov. Bradford and his almost equally illustrious son William Bradford, Jr.; passing the cellar of the house occupied at least by the latter, and also by the last apple-tree of his orchard, a high-top sweeting, set out, it is believed, in 1669, and which in this year of grace, 1876, bears a small quantity of fair fruit." Notwithstanding the great age of this apple-tree it came to an untimely end, for a boy on a "Fourth of July" made a bonfire in its old hollow trunk, and every vestige of life in the historic tree went up in smoke on that "Independence Day." Since the celebration at Kingston, the desire has been repeatedly expressed that some memorial be placed on the old estate so that it may be kept in remembrance by the future generations, and, at last, the opportunity has come. Soon after the property came into our possession we communicated with Mr. Gamaliel Bradford, Governor of the Society of Mayflower Descendants, at Boston, and made known our desire to have the descendants of Gov. Bradford interested in marking the particular lot which includes the site of their ancestral home; and he soon made the generous offer to contribute one
quarter

quarter the value of the lot, if it could be reserved, and the "marking and ornamentation of it could come," as he said, afterward. As so much interest seemed to be manifested at the very first of the movement, requests for aid in the work were soon sent to descendants in various parts of the country, first, of course, to some who were known to be pleased to claim the worthy Pilgrim Governor as their ancestor; then to a few of those whose names appeared as members of the different patriotic societies; and to others as their names came to mind or were suggested. Favorable responses soon came, and some of the contributions were from wholly unexpected sources, being obtained through the influence of persons who had already aided in the work, or from those who knew such was in progress and desired its accomplishment. What memorial may be placed on the lot is a question for the future, but one thing is certain,—the first stage of the work is completed, the ground is reserved for that purpose, and will henceforth belong to the Massachusetts Society of Mayflower Descendants. The names of those who have the honor of contributing to the fund for the purchase of the lot, and who will be considered as the donors of it to the Society, are here given:

Gamaliel Bradford	.	.	.	Boston, Mass.
Grace Bradford Fairfax	.	.	.	New York.
Frances Maria Scott Sherry	.	.	.	Troy, N. Y.

Catharine Ditson . . .	Boston, Mass.
Mary Burr Porter . . .	Boston, Mass.
Emily Bradford Whipple . .	North Adams, Mass.
Hannah Gould Mynderse . .	Brooklyn, N. Y.
George L. Bradford . . .	Utica, N. Y.
Samuel Eliot . . .	Boston, Mass.
Emily M. Morison . . .	Boston, Mass.
Amelia S. Quinton . . .	Philadelphia, Pa.
George Sumner Bradford . .	Minneapolis, Minn.
William W. Webb . . .	Rochester, N. Y.
Eliza Edes Hickling Bradford .	Boston, Mass.
Fanny Gore Bradford Cutler .	Boston, Mass.
Susan B. Willard . . .	Hingham, Mass.
Edwin R. Bradford . . .	Evanston, Ill.
Wadsworth J. Brewster . . .	Hannibal, N. Y.
John Whittlesey Walton . . .	Cleveland, O.
Jonn E. Ensign . . .	Cleveland, O.
Mary Watson Borup . . .	Germantown, Pa.
Mary Loring Williams . . .	Urbana, O.
Isabella Eldridge . . .	Norfolk, Conn.
Jane Trowbridge Hotchkiss .	New Haven, Conn.
Helen P. Maxwell . . .	New York.
Emily Strong Taintor . . .	Hartford, Conn.
Royal B. Bradford . . .	Port Tampa, Fla.
Lily Virginia Larkin . . .	Sing Sing, N. Y.
Willard Lincoln Sampson . .	Newton, Mass.
Brady Electus Backus . . .	New York.
Mary E. Bradford . . .	Yonkers, N. Y.
Mary A. T. N. Starkweather .	Ypsilanti, Mich.
Alden S. Bradford . . .	Kingston, Mass.
Benjamin Delano Sweet . . .	Boston, Mass.
Rebecca H. Christian . . .	Boston, Mass.
Albert A. Christian . . .	Boston, Mass.
Belle Vaill Torrey . . .	Worcester, Mass.
Louisa M. S. Taylor ; . .	Germantown, Pa.
Georgiana Webb Owen . . .	Ypsilanti, Mich.
Susan Bradford Cook Gilkey .	Portland, Me.
George W. Harman . . .	Bennington, Vt.

Ella Bradford Burnham	.	.	Norwich, Conn.
Edward H. Bradford	.	.	Boston, Mass.
Amory Howe Bradford	.	.	Montclair, N. J.
Lilla Manning Briggs	.	.	New York.
Martha Le Baron Stoddard	.	.	Plymouth, Mass.
Ellen Jenette Stoddard	.	.	Plymouth, Mass.
Sarah Sisson Wendelken	.	.	Dallas, Tex.
Alice Maud Allen Atwater	.	.	Pittsfield, Mass.
William Bradford Atwater	.	.	Pittsfield, Mass.
Hannah Stevenson Davis	.	.	Plymouth, Mass.
Joanna White Morgan	.	.	New Bedford, Mass.
Lydia T. Bradford Adams	.	.	Kingston, Mass.
Horatio Adams	.	.	Kingston, Mass.
Lucia Alden Bradford Knapp	.	.	Plymouth, Mass.
Laura Stoddard Brewster	.	.	Plymouth, Mass.
William Brewster	.	.	Plymouth, Mass.
Mary Breck Vaill	.	.	New York.
Anna Isabel La Monte	.	.	Bound Brook, N. J.
Edward Breck Vaill	.	.	Pittsburg, Pa.
Charles B. Humphrey	.	.	Providence, R. I.
James L. Humphrey, Jr.	.	.	New Bedford, Mass.

It may be well before closing this paper to mention one or two suggestions, which have been made by contributors, in relation to a memorial of some kind which should be placed upon the lot. Some would be satisfied to have the ground left ungraded so to show the depressions in the surface where the buildings once stood, but to have a suitable fence or curbing around it, with perhaps a heap of large bowlders in the centre, on one of which to have a bronze tablet placed having a suitable inscription upon it. A better suggestion has been made, and that is

is to build a structure like a castle tower of rough stone, the base at least to be of good-sized bowlders, while the upper part might be constructed of brick, with a facing on the outside of rubble work. Such a structure would need to be made high enough to be above any buildings which might be erected on the lots in the immediate vicinity; and we think this idea of a tower would be received favorably by many if they were on the spot, for it is a slight eminence commanding a very pleasant prospect of the lands bordering on the bay, with a full view of the monument to Myles Standish, three miles distant in an easterly direction across the water, while Plymouth is distinctly seen at the right, four miles away. The monument on Captain's Hill at Duxbury is not far from the estate of the old military commander of the colony; and what would be more appropriate than that the ancient estate of its illustrious Governor, in those early days, should be similarly marked. At present the lot is designated by a simple sign-board bearing the following inscription:—

“This eminence is a portion of
The ancient estate of William Bradford,
the illustrious Governor of Plymouth Colony,
where he had a house before 1637.
Here his son, the ‘Honourable Major William
Bradford,’ lived and died in the year 1704.
Wamsutta, the Indian Chieftain, tarried
here just previous to his death in 1662.”

The foregoing sketch will doubtless meet the eye of many of the Bradford descendants who would willingly have assisted in the work, which has thus far been done, had they been called upon for aid or had had any intimation of what was desired to be accomplished. To such, we will say that when an appeal shall be made for funds to erect a memorial on the ancient estate to the memory of their illustrious ancestor, their opportunity will come to do honor to his memory; and to those who have prepared the way by reserving the land for such a noble purpose, we again thank them, one and all, for the cheerful manner in which they have responded to the call made upon them and for the interest they have manifested in the work.

The generations went their way,
 Their children's children roam
 And thousands of them claim to-day
 This, their ancestral home.

PRESENTATION OF THE "BRADFORD LOT" TO
 THE "SOCIETY OF MAYFLOWER DESCEND-
 ANTS."

A meeting of the above-named Society assembled at Kingston on Thursday, Sept. 30, 1897. It was a beautiful autumn day, the weather being everything that could be desired, and about one hundred and twenty-five persons were present on the old Bradford place, delegations having come from the adjoining

adjoining towns of Plymouth and Duxbury. Mr. George Ernest Bowman, secretary of the Society, announced the death of Mrs. Mary A. T. N. Starkweather, of Ypsilanti, Mich., one of the contributors to the fund for the purchase of the lot and its reservation. She is the first member of the Society who has died. Mr. Bowman then stated for what purpose the meeting was held, and called upon Hon. William T. Davis, of Plymouth, to make the opening address.

REMARKS BY MR. DAVIS.

In introducing the simple ceremonies of this occasion I have only a few informal words to say: You stand today on hallowed ground. On the 15th of December, 1620, old style, the Mayflower weighed anchor at Provincetown and on the 18th, while lying in Plymouth Harbor, some of the party landed.

They found no navigable river, but "four or five running brooks of very sweet, fresh water that all ran into the sea." On the 19th they discovered Jones River, and as Bradford states, "went up three English miles." So far as is known, this was the first discovery by any white man of the river which has always since that time borne the name of Thomas Jones, the captain of the Mayflower. The territory through which the river runs was called Jones River until 1717, when on
the

the establishment of a parish within its limits, it was called Jones River Parish until 1726, when it was set off from Plymouth and incorporated as a town. At the time of its incorporation it was at first proposed to call it Ashburton, but finally Lieutenant-Governor Dummer gave it the name of Kingston. As early as 1636 so many of the Plymouth colonists had obtained grants of lands, and made settlements in the outlying districts of Jones River, Duxbury and Marshfield, that it was proposed by some to transfer the Plymouth Church to Jones River and erect a meeting-house. Up to that time public worship had been held either in the Common House or in the fort, on what is now Burial Hill, and as an immediate construction of a church was contemplated it was apparently desired to take some definite steps towards a change of location before it was too late. The movement failed, and in the next year, 1637, a meeting-house was erected on the north side of Plymouth Town Square. Among those who had secured lands and more or less permanent settlements at Jones River, prior to 1636, were Gov. Bradford, John Howland, Stephen Tracy and Abraham Pierce. At a later date it became also the home of Thomas Willet, one of the ablest men in the Plymouth Colony, who, after the capture of New York by the United Colonies in 1664, was
selected

selected to act as its first mayor. The precise date and extent of the grant of Jones River lands to Gov. Bradford cannot be fixed. It is known to have extended at least a mile north and south, and it probably comprised about three hundred acres. His house is first mentioned in the description of a road recorded in 1637. This road, as the record states, crossed Jones River, and thence going up the hill through a valley to Abraham Pierce's, turned northerly to the house of Stephen Tracy, leaving Gov. Bradford's house on the west. The ford of the river is satisfactorily determined by the easily traced valley up the hill, and the hill is that now known as Abraham's Hill, taking its name from Abraham Pierce whose house was somewhere near the new Public Library. The house of Stephen Tracy stood near the site of the house of John H. Parks, and the easterly line of Gov. Bradford's land can be defined with considerable accuracy. The quarter of an acre on which we stand, bounded on the westerly side by the fence and on the other three sides by a line of newly planted trees, was never alienated from the Bradford family until 1822. It is included within a recent purchase made by Dr. Thomas Bradford Drew, of Plymouth, and from him passes today to the Massachusetts Society of the Mayflower Descendants. Though not a
matter

matter of absolute record, there can be no doubt that on this quarter of an acre the house of Gov. Bradford stood. It is known with certainty that his son, Major William Bradford, deputy-governor of Plymouth Colony, lived here; and the depression in the ground near where I stand marks the site of his house. It is not for me, however, to enter minutely into details which more fittingly belong to Dr. Drew to explain, and I take pleasure in presenting him to you as not only the recent owner of the land, but also as an historian who has rendered valuable service to Kingston, his native town.

Dr. Drew, of Plymouth, then proceeded to give a short historical sketch of the Bradford estate, and how it had descended from the original occupants down to the present day, and also of the movement begun a few months ago to reserve the particular lot on which the company were then standing; but that portion of the exercises will not be given here, as it would be a virtual repetition of what has appeared on the previous pages. He then asked Mr. Bowman to accept the deed of the lot for the "Society of Mayflower Descendants" in the State of Massachusetts, as a present from the contributors to the fund for the purchase of the same, and added that it contained two conditions, viz.: "This deed is given upon the express condition that
said

said premises shall be used by said Society as a memorial to Gov. William Bradford and his son, Major William Bradford, in such manner as said Society may think proper, and for no other purpose.

“And I do hereby give, grant, bargain, sell and convey unto the town of Kingston the right of reversion of said premises, and in case said Society shall be dissolved, I give, grant, bargain, sell and convey said premises to said town of Kingston from and after such dissolution.”

Mr. Bowman then accepted the deed in behalf of the Society, thanking the donors and also the grantor of the deed for his efforts by first suggesting the work and then carrying it on to its accomplishment. He promised that the Society would have proper care over the grounds in the future.

A letter was then read from the governor of the Society:—

Boston, Sept. 24, 1897.

Mr. Thomas Bradford Drew.

My dear Sir:—Acknowledging your kind note of 23 inst., I very much regret that it will be impossible for me to be present at the interesting exercises on the 30th. I am glad that the Society is to receive such a precious trust, and hope that some day a suitable memorial may be erected upon it.

Sincerely yours,

GAMALIEL BRADFORD.

The

The exercises were closed with a benediction by Rev. C. J. De Normandie, minister of the first Congregational Society of Kingston.

APPENDIX A.

It would be interesting to know whether either of the silver articles mentioned in the 13th, 14th, 15th, items of Major. Wm. Bradford's will, on page ¹⁶~~21~~, are in existence today. It is possible that one or more may be, and yet the possessor, if such be the case, be totally ignorant of their origin; for although the silver bowl bequeathed to the "son David after his mother's decease, not to be alienated from the family of Bradford's" may have remained in the family name for forty years or more; yet as he died before either of his children became of age, and his widow married Mr. Ludden, a merchant of Boston, soon afterward, there are several ways in which it might have passed from the family name. The eldest son of David was Nathaniel, of Plymouth, who died in 1757, and the only daughter was Lydia, who married first Elkanah Cushman and second Lazarus Le Baron. So here are two families into one of which it might have passed, and thus left the name of Bradford. There is now deposited in Pilgrim Hall a pewter tankard and plate which has come down from the days of Major William,
through

through Nathan, the youngest son of David. They bear the crown mark of William III., of England, and the Major was living throughout the whole reign of that sovereign. The silver wine cup which the grandson William was to have, may have gone among the Bradfords of Connecticut, as his descendants lived there.

APPENDIX B.

23 The genealogical question referred to on page 27 is this: It is recorded on the town records of Plymouth that Ephraim Bradford (son of Major William) married Elizabeth Bartlett, Feb. 13, 1710, and Fessenden, in his Bradford Genealogy, as well as other writers, have of course taken that as authority. When Deacon Foster, more than twenty years ago, made the statement that said Bradford's wife was Elizabeth Brewster, sister of Deacon Wrestling Brewster, we reminded him of the record at Plymouth and the seeming discrepancy. He answered that Bradford might have had two wives, or that she had previously married a Bartlett, and, in that case, would not have retained her family name at the time of her marriage to a second husband, but, however that might have been, "he knew that Elizabeth, the sister of Deacon Wrestling Brewster, was the wife of Ephraim Bradford, and that he had a document wherein Bradford
stated

stated that Brewster was his brother-in-law." As the question was brought up last summer by genealogists, search was made among the papers of the late Deacon Foster, and the document, dated 1734, was found which contained the statement as given above. As the only wife of Wrestling Brewster was Hannah Thomas, the relationship of brother-in-law must have come from the other side. The Plymouth records have been investigated lately, and no Elizabeth Bartlett can be found who would have been of suitable age to have been married in 1710. Davis, in his "Ancient Landmarks," page 21, has Elizabeth, daughter of Samuel Bartlett, as the wife of Ephraim Bradford, but the probate records show that she was a child at that time, while on page 32, Bradford's wife is given as Elizabeth Brewster. As two of his brothers and a nephew had all married Bartletts, it is barely possible that the clerk, in recording the marriage, repeated that name instead of giving the right one. The same document shows that Caleb Stetson, the early ship-builder at Jones River, was also brother-in-law of Bradford, and therefore the statement in Winsor's history of Duxbury, page 236, that said Stetson married Sarah, daughter of Deacon William Brewster, should be, Sarah, daughter of Wrestling Brewster and sister of Deacon Wrestling Brewster. In the ancient burial-ground at Kingston the
gravestone

gravestone of Elizabeth, wife of Ephraim Bradford, is still preserved, and the inscription shows that she died "Dec. 5, 1741, in her 51st yr." At the general meeting of the Societies of Mayflower Descendants at Plymouth on the 6th of September, 1897, the ancient document to which reference has been made was shown to several persons, and the following certificate was signed.

"We the undersigned, hereby certify, that we have seen the ancient document, dated December, 1734, wherein Ephraim Bradford states that he was brother-in-law of Wrestling Brewster and Caleb Stetson."

WILLIAM T. DAVIS,

Author of Ancient Landmarks.

GEORGE ERNEST BOWMAN,

Secretary Society of Mayflower Descendants.

RICHARD H. GREENE,

Historian Society of Mayflower Descendants.

APPENDIX C.

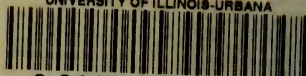
The ancient lane referred to on page ~~30~~, 26 led to the Stony Brook landing place, a locality a short distance below the present iron works there, and where small vessels were built in the early days of the Colony. In a deed dated 1714, conveying property in that vicinity, it describes it as being "near to the landing place where Caleb Stetson's building yard was

was wont to be." Many people now living remember the old brick-yard near the same locality. It belonged to Joshua Bradford (son of Israel) who removed to Maine the middle of the last century, and who with his wife Hannah, the daughter of Elisha Bradford, was massacred by the Indians at Meduncook, now Friendship, in that State, on the 27th of May, 1756. In Fessenden's Genealogy, New Eng. Hist. and Gen. Register, Vol. IV., pp. 49 and 236, it will be seen that the editor's notes accompanying, which relate to that barbarous affair, express doubts as to the correctness of some portions of the genealogical part of the story which have come down to our day, and although those notes were written nearly fifty years ago, yet the same doubts exist to-day. Some of the descendants of Joshua Bradford claim that he lived about ten years in Maine, and that would make the time of his removal from Kingston about 1746; but the Kingston town records show the list of his children covering all those years from 1737 to after 1753, eight of the names to the last-named year being perfectly legible, while two follow which would carry the dates along to just about the time when the parents are said to have been killed by the savages in their new home. Anyone who examines the notes referred to will see that this discrepancy was noticed by the editor.

It

It hardly seems probable that those names would have been entered upon the Kingston records had not the children been born in that town, yet it is possible that some of the names might have been recorded there after the deaths of the parents. Records may be in existence at Friendship, Me., which would show that the massacre was not at so early a date as 1756. The French and Indian war was not really terminated until 1763; and if it can be shown that the invasion of that frontier settlement, which cost the lives of those two members of the Bradford family, was at a later date than that which has heretofore been given, then the doubts connected with the previous accounts of that tragic event will be easily explained.

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